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Union with God

David Lovell

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David Scull

Union with God in Thought and Faith

Reflections on the Enlargement of Religious Life through Modern Knowledge

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In Boyhood.

Memoirs of David Scull.

DAVID SCULL was born at Sculltown, Salem County, New Jersey, First-month 17th, 1836. He came of a distinguished line of English ancestors, going directly back, on his father's side, to the time of King William Rufus. Among his ancestors, on his mother's side, was Dorothea Scott, of Scott's Hall in Kent, one of the foremost families of the county. She became a prominent minister of the Society of Friends in the first period of the Quaker movement, and when on a visit to the court in 1661, to congratulate Charles II on his Restoration, she was supposed to have presented to the king a little book written by herself, now excessively rare, with the title "A Call to Repentance." With her began the Quaker strain in the family, destined for many generations afterwards to be of powerful influence in the Society of Friends.

The Sculls were the founders of Sculltown, and there were among them many who were prominent Friends. David Scull's grandfather, Gideon Scull, gave to Woodstown Friends the ground for their meeting-house, and, like his grandson, he was always zealous to promote the interests of the Society.

David Scull's early education was acquired at Westtown Boarding School. In 1849 he entered the Introductory Department of Haverford School, and was graduated from Haverford College in 1854. At his funeral, an elderly Friend, who had been at school and college with him, was overheard to say that although he had known David Scull from the time he was a boy of six years old, he had never heard him say a word which could not have been said aloud at his own funeral.

Already in his college days he began to show deep spiritual interests, and though full of vivacity and boyish delights, his mind turned easily to serious concerns. In one of his addresses before the Loganian Society given, apparently, in his senior year, he presents with

considerable power the beauty of classical literature and its cultural value. "But," he concludes, "there is another literature and a higher, justly called sacred, which claims the attention of all. And the scholar who makes ancient (i. e. classical) literature alone the object of his attainments, falls far short of the attainable standard of perfection. It is a treasure which he will share in common with the poor and lowly, a body of truths which require not the soil of genius, or of talent, such as Plato and the heathen philosophers sought for but found not, such as even modern philosophers have sought in vain, who, though they might speak in a hundred tongues, would find themselves strangers to *one small voice* whose teachings would be unheeded and unknown."

He was married in 1861 to Hannah Ellicott Coale, of Baltimore. She had come to Philadelphia to be bridesmaid at the wedding of a friend, and here David Scull first saw her. She was a very attractive girl and he was a young man of beautiful features, a noble presence and charming manners. They soon discovered their

mutual love, and the union was one of peculiar beauty and joy. Their lives were united in spirit and purpose,

> "Two distincts, division none;
> Number there in love was slain,"

so that all the remainder of David Scull's life was touched and moulded by this love which became a permanent part of his being.

Very soon after his marriage he was drafted, and faced what was for him a most serious crisis, for he could neither consent to fight, nor send a substitute. He went to the recruiting office to be examined, in the hope that some physical inability would be discovered. On the contrary, he was pronounced perfectly sound, and returned to his home in great distress. The knot was cut in an unexpected way. Some unknown Friend with less of conscientious scruple paid the bounty, and David Scull was informed that he would not be needed. Almost immediately after, he put on the plain coat, which he ever after continued to wear.

Soon after leaving college, he began what proved to be a very successful business career

HANNAH COALE SCULL.

as a wool merchant. For twenty years—from 1864 to 1884—his brother Edward L. Scull was joined with him in this business, and after the death of his brother he continued the business until 1891, when he retired.

The following letter found among David Scull's papers is an interesting and valuable testimony from a man of wide business experience:

DAVID SCULL,

My dear Old Friend:—You were the third friend to subscribe to me when I commenced business on my own account in this city in 1872 and paid me the price I asked, and continued to do so until I went out of business. In twenty-five years there have been only three houses in business in the United States and Canada that have voluntarily told me I had rated them too high for capital; you were one of them, and I complied with your request reducing the rating. This did not shake your confidence in my work and you continued to use me until you went out of business.

I am, sincerely, yours,

HENRY BROCK,

President of Brock's Commercial Agency.

He was the most active member of the group of business men who organized the Mortgage Trust Company of Pennsylvania, and he was

the Vice-President of the company from the date of its foundation in 1886.

He was one of the prime organizers of the Standard Roller Bearing Company, which was founded in 1898, and he greatly contributed to the successful development of this extensive business.

The great calamity of his life came in 1871 when death separated him from his beloved wife. The chastening effect of the sorrow was, however, one of the greatest moulding influences of his life. He was left with one child, William Ellis.

President M. Carey Thomas, of Bryn Mawr College, in her *In Memoriam* address has beautifully touched upon his grief and loneliness, and she has given, in words so fitting that they leave nothing to be desired, her impression and appreciation of his attractive personality.

"I had known him, as a little child knows its parents' friends, from the time nearly forty years ago when, after his young wife's death, his great loneliness led him to come often to our house to talk of her to my father, who had been

her first cousin and intimate friend. I can remember about this time hearing with awe that she had said before she died, after ten brief years of married life, that David Scull had been an absolutely perfect husband, and had never spoken an impatient word.

"He mourned her faithfully for thirty-six years. Only last year he missed an important business engagement because, as he wrote me afterwards, since his marriage he had never failed to keep the anniversary of his wedding day sacred from other engagements. The students who attended the Summer School of Religious History held last summer at Bryn Mawr, and heard the paper read by David Scull on Sunday afternoon, will recall the emotion which overcame him when he reached the passage which told of his belief that his wife's guardian spirit watched over him.

"I remember him in those early days as the handsomest man I ever saw, and his extraordinary beauty of feature, coloring, and expression was a never-failing delight to all his friends. He had great lovableness and charm, a most

attractive and winning personality. He was always courteous and polite. People loved him. And he had what many attractive people have not—the gift of caring for people and things very much indeed. His friends, and even strangers, were quick to feel this at once. I never knew him indifferent.

"But I think that perhaps the most wonderful impression he made upon those of us who were privileged to know him intimately, and love him, as we all did dearly, was an impression of sheer goodness. I do not know how to describe it in any other way. He was good with the kind of goodness one imagines in the holy company of the apostles and martyrs. He was good with the kind of goodness which we sometimes feel in really good women, and seldom in really good men. One felt sure that he had been good from six years of age, as his friend said at his funeral. He was good in a way that made women realize what men will be like in the far-off years when the standards of good women for good men have prevailed from generation to generation, as the standards of good men of the

David Scull and J. Bevan Braithwait
at Niagara Falls.

type we know now have prevailed for good women, and have moulded them in each generation nearer to the ideals of chastity and purity which we reverence in our mothers to-day.

"Although the kind of goodness I am speaking of seems to be wholly distinct and *sui generis*, David Scull had also the goodness which comes from a devout Christian faith. He was truly spiritually-minded. He read and thought much on spiritual subjects. The range of his theological reading was unusually wide. He was very liberal and very charitable in his views of Christian faith. His excellent intellect was applied to the difficult questions which lie on the boundary line between religious and philosophical thought. He was always eager to talk about them. He put into such subjects an intensity of emotion which tended to carry even the sober-minded listener off his feet into the lofty regions of thought where he himself was most at home.

"He cared in this same intense and altogether delightful fashion about the college. I sometimes used to think that the salvation of man-

kind through the new theology, and the salvation of Bryn Mawr College through an adequate endowment, were the two things he thought of most, and cared for most, in the last few years of his life."

He was elected a manager of Haverford College in 1865, and continued to fill the position until his death. He occupied the position of Treasurer from the years 1866 to 1883, showing great interest in the details of college management, frequently visiting the institution and contributing liberally to its funds. He conceived and carried to completion the great improvement on the College Lane, which brought to the college a beautiful row of houses and a considerable addition to its productive resources.

He was elected an Overseer of the William Penn Charter School in 1878 and served on the Committee throughout the remaining years of his life, giving freely and gladly to the school his time and thought.

Dr. Joseph W. Taylor, in his will, named David Scull one of the thirteen Friends, who,

with their successors, were to form the corporation, "The Trustees of Bryn Mawr College."

In the period when the plans for the future college were maturing, Dr. Taylor and David Scull were frequently together. They often drove about the country in search of a suitable site for the new institution, and it is now an interesting fact that they bought one site, which was later rejected, before the present college grounds were selected.

On the organization of the corporation, he was chosen its Secretary, which post he filled until 1895. He was Vice-President from 1895 to 1904, and from 1906 until his death, President of the Trustees. He was Chairman of the Committee on Buildings and Grounds from 1885 to 1904. His service to the college can best be appreciated from the words of its President, M. Carey Thomas:

"Every college building, after Taylor Hall and Merion Hall which were planned by the Founder of the College himself, was built under the supervision of David Scull as Chairman of the Trustees' Committee on Buildings and

Grounds; Radnor, Denbigh, the Pembrokes, Rockefeller and the Library took their places in beautiful succession on the college campus, each in its appointed place. Their harmonious arrangement and unity of design are due in great part to David Scull's love of beauty, to his belief in following expert opinion, to his openmindedness, his readiness to be convinced and, above all, to his great love for the college and his single-hearted determination to give it the very best.

"It was so in everything. He had no axes to grind, no enemies to defeat, no favorites to exalt. He loved everyone, and was loved by everyone capable of understanding his lovableness. He believed in everyone, and was believed in by everyone worthy of his belief. He was very gentle and courteous by grace and nature, but when he was sure that it was right to act—when the college was at stake—he was as bold as a lion.

"For many years, indeed almost since its opening in 1885, certainly since I became President in 1894, not a week passed when he was at

At Syracuse, Sicily.

home, without one visit, and often two, from David Scull. Sometimes it was to look into the cloister, sometimes to watch basket-ball for ten minutes, usually on more serious errands, but always for something which showed his love and interest. And every week, and every month, and every year, the college was in his mind and heart."

Few things were more influential in the life of David Scull than his trips abroad. He greatly enjoyed beautiful natural scenery and always spoke with emotion of the impression the Alpine scenery made upon him. He also appreciated to the full the privilege of visiting historic places, particularly places which appealed to his religious interests. One of his keenest disappointments was his inability on account of ill health while in Syria to visit Jerusalem, but he thoroughly enjoyed an extended tour through the East. It was because he thus recognized the value of travel that he made generous provision in his will for the teachers of Westtown School in turn to spend their summer vacations in Europe.

His group of intimate friends in his own country was very large, for he possessed in high degree the great gift of knowing how to share himself, and of drawing out the best in others. One of his friends, whose friendship with him began in his college days, in a letter written shortly before David Scull's death, said, "Thou art the one living person to whom I can freely communicate what seem to me important thoughts and truths." It was always a beautiful sight to see him with his little granddaughter, and one saw in his love and affection for her the native sweetness and tenderness of his soul. It was naturally a mutual love and they were both never happier than when together.

The great religious teachers who most influenced his mind in the mature, middle period of his life, were three Scotchmen: Norman McLeod, J. McLeod Campbell and Thomas Erskine of Linlathen. Two other religious teachers, Archdeacon Basil Wilberforce and Charles Cuthbert Hall of New York, at a later period had a similar creative influence. These teachers all turned his attention to the central

With His Granddaughter.

questions of religion—the character of God, the meaning of atonement, the nature of Christ, the mystery of suffering and the Divine possibilities of human life.

He was not a fluent, easy writer, and most of his contributions to religious literature cost him deep travail and great effort, but there was a note of genuine reality in all he wrote. His most important contributions are: a booklet on the "Ordinances," published in 1890; "The Need of the Bible School to Supplement the Teaching in the Home and in the Ministry," 1895; "Salvation in a Twofold Aspect," 1896; "Communion and At-one-ment," 1902; and a valuable paper printed in the *Westonian* for Seventh-month, 1902. In nearly all these he refers to his indebtedness to his great Scotch teachers. Two sentences from the article in the *Westonian* show the habitual bent of mind in his later thinking:

"The interest in the Incarnation must ever be supreme to the thoughtful mind, because it relates to the meeting point in history and in experience of the finite with the infinite, the

union of the human with the Divine." "Participation in an intelligent union with the Divine life is like passing from even a well lighted room out into the *open*, under the infinite, tender sky."

Though his life was profoundly influenced by writers beyond the circle of his religious fellowship, his fundamental religious interests were always in the Society of Friends to which he belonged and whose principles were woven into the very fiber of his being. He was a personal witness to the fact of Divine intercourse and communion, and his own experience bore out the faith of his Society that in the stillness man may find God. He had an intense love of the great principles of truth cherished by Friends, and he did all that lay in his power to promote that branch of the Church. He was for many years an Elder in the Meeting held at Twelfth Street in Philadelphia, and he was worthy to stand among the pillar Friends who have adorned the doctrine of inward Light and Grace.

We reprint in full the estimate of his life and character written by Rufus M. Jones for *The American Friend:*

"It is difficult to say what one genuinely feels to be true of our Friend David Scull without seeming, to those who did not know him well, to be indulging in fulsome praise and eulogy, a thing which would be most distasteful to him. But I cannot for a moment allow this danger to keep me from saying what I think is fitting of the life which has just been transplanted.

"To me he was the consummate flower of American Quakerism in my generation. There were and are others who had a freer gift of utterance, a greater range of thought, a larger power of interpretation, but no one who has shown in fuller beauty that something which we call *spirit*, that indescribable thing called *living personality*. I knew very little of the making of this life—the stages of faith, the wrestlings, the baptisms and the shaping processes—for he was already in his ripe, mature powers when our friendship began. But I felt at once that I had found, and was sharing, a wonderful life, and this feeling has grown with the years, as I have seen trait after trait of his life come into view.

"To speak of the most human trait first, his *tenderness* was always an impressive characteristic of his spirit. 'Tender as woman' describes him. His heart was always within reach. I went to see him once and found him profoundly moved, his eyes dim with tears. He held in his hand a letter written to him years before by his wife who had been separated from him by death in his early manhood. He had been re-reading it and the flood of love had broken over him and reached the depth of his being. Her death was, beyond question, the great turning-point of his life. There was no diminution of his love for her—rather a gathered intensity—but henceforth the tide of his life set with a deep ground swell toward the things of the Spirit. Those who were present have never forgotten the powerful impression which his words made when by her grave he solemnly said: 'I have searched my heart as with a candle and I find no rebellion in it.' Those who saw him only as a man of business affairs and knew only of his calm, cool judgment, hardly realized this deep tenderness which was

Ready for Meeting.

never far from the surface and which made him responsive to all genuine human need or suffering.

"I do not need to say many words of his large generosity, for almost everybody knows of it. There have been hardly any movements in my time for the expansion of Quakerism, for the widening of education, for equipment to better service to which he has not liberally contributed. Every Friends' college had received means from his hands, and on many of them he had bestowed much more than his funds—he had given his personal interest, counsel, prayers and patient labor. Haverford and Bryn Mawr Colleges, especially, and the William Penn Charter School and *The American Friend* owe him a vast ebt, beyond all estimate.

"His passion for truth was another striking trait. He loved the old ways, the heritage from the past, made sacred by sacrifice and struggle, the precious legacies from honest predecessors; but still more than those he loved the *truth*. With all his tenderness and all his reverence, he was perfectly fearless in his devotion to any

fuller truth which came to him and which led into new paths. He was open windowed to all the light that broke upon him. It was this attitude which kept him constantly growing and advancing. I have never known any person who gave me such a revelation of the majesty of truth and the awful sin of playing false with it as he did. There was something in him of that vision into the eternal nature of things which made the Hebrew prophets so wonderful.

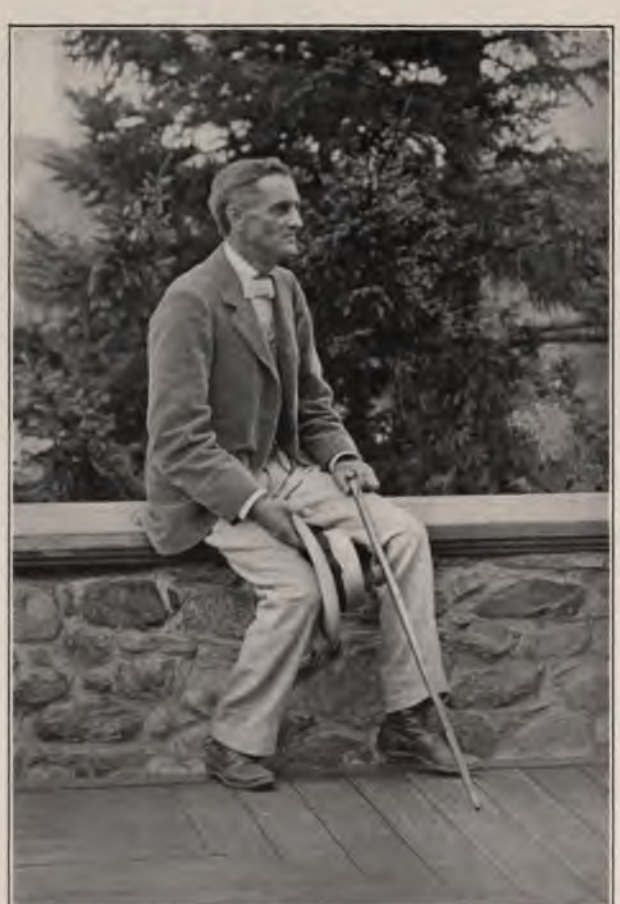
"It was just this passion for truth and reality which kept his mind continually turning to that deepest question of life—the meaning of the Cross. Some can put it into a phrase and have done with it. Some are content to say over the words of famous creeds as though the mystery of infinite grace could be put away between the lids of a book, like a pressed flower. *He* was never one of those. He could not take his religion ready made from anybody. He faced the issues, for himself, and with 'toil of heart and knees' he wrought out his great faith in a God who shares His life with us, travails for us,

bears our sin and blindness, and gives Himself in sacrificing love. The drawers of his desk were full of clippings, many of them bearing on the Atonement. Every scrap which could help him find the reality of this gift of love had been saved up. His library contains the books of the great teachers who had felt the beatings of the Divine Heart and could hint to him some larger meaning in that central event of human history. And he *found* the meaning which met his need.

"And whatever he discovered, through experience or toil, he strove to contribute and share. The spiritual enlargement of his deeply loved Society was the supreme purpose of his life. He loved it as the ideal patriot loves his country. It was never long out of his thoughts. No sacrifice was too great, if it would promote the cause, no labor too heavy, no cost too great. Through the entire summer, in weakness of body and during sleepless nights he had worked to finish a little book, his last message, which he hoped might be a contribution toward the advancement of the Society in this time of transition.

"But no contribution he has made or left compares with that of his own life. God had given him a beautiful face, and He had made him, like Galahad, 'as good as he was beautiful.' There was a fine harmony of outer and inner, so that the whole impression was one of beauty—a fulfilment of the prayer that the beauty of the Lord his God might be upon the servant, that the grace of the Lord Jesus might be upon the disciple. He walked among us for a whole generation and wist not that his face did shine. And we must needs live our own lives now in truer consecration because he has lived among us and shown us on his face the glory of the Lord whom he loved and served."

The "little book" to which reference is made above—"his last message"—is given in the following pages. As soon as he learned that a Summer School for the Advancement of Religious Truth was to be held at Bryn Mawr College in the summer of 1907, he felt drawn to prepare a paper that should set forth the contribution which modern thought has made to fundamental religious conceptions. In his state



Summering at Islesboro, Me.

of delicate health he found the undertaking a very heavy one. His whole thought was absorbed in the undertaking. Many nights were passed with almost no sleep and he frequently rose from his bed to put down in his note book the thoughts that had arisen in his waking hours. Many such note books were found after his death, filled with ideas at various stages of development. Slowly and with much effort, he brought the paper into final form. It was given with impressive power and the occasion was a memorable one.

He soon after went to his summer home and took up the task of preparing his paper for publication. Nearly all his letters during the summer refer to the occupation of his mind with this task, and all his reading bore upon it. Referring two or three days before his death to his efforts on the paper, he said to his family, "I have tried to do my best," and to those of us who know, the words are as true as they are pathetic.

He came back to the city in the autumn visibly worn and weakened. But wherever

he went, his note book was in his pocket and his thoughts were busy with his paper. In the hope of increasing his vitality and power, he went, with his family, to the Hot Springs of Virginia where he quite seriously gave himself up to the care and nursing of his health. But it was to no purpose, and he returned to his home unimproved. His condition became serious soon after his return, and steadly grew more so. Shortly before his death, when he realized that his own hand could not prepare for the press the paper which had so long occupied his thought, he requested that three of his friends, Joseph Elkinton, George A. Barton and Rufus M. Jones, should be asked to finish the undertaking which he had tried to carry to completion. His death occurred at his home, Leighton Place, Overbrook, Eleventh-month twenty-second, 1907.

These friends have now accomplished the service thus sacredly laid upon them. They have printed the paper as it stood in David Scull's final draft, having made only slight, minor alterations, for they wished to pass on

A Quaker Wedding.

David Scull's message as it had shaped itself in his own mind. For the help of readers, they have prepared an introduction to each section of the paper, giving a simplified summary or argument of the section. We can only hope that all readers may feel in these papers the beautiful and shining spirit of our friend and that his last concern to help his generation may bear much fruit.

RUFUS M. JONES.

David Scull,
1907.

Union with God.

CHAPTER I.

The Place of the Mind in Religion.

[*Outline of the Argument.*—Until recently no place was accorded by Friends to the logical thought of trained minds as an assistance to the Godward life. The sphere of spiritual life was thought to be confined to the affections and the will. The new outlook of religious thought makes a recognition of the important relation of the mind to the spiritual life unavoidable, but it is only such an *added* use of the mind as Barclay and Pennington would, if alive, approve.

A great change in religious thought is in progress, which involves new conceptions of God and new views of the relation between God and man. The unrest of the present is not a cause for anxiety. It means that man's soul, which has struggled for light through all the past, is catching a new message. Modern religious thought is believed by those who enjoy its light to contain a revelation of God second only to that which attended the first proclamation of the Gospel. This new revelation is primarily addressed to man's intelligence. Moral requirements are not thereby weakened, but are receiving new sanctions. It is true that the moral relation of God to man is the essence of the Christian life, and is alone essential to salvation. Mental

research into the things of God has been supposed to be fraught with danger to faith and peace. One part of that great commandment which Christ declared to be the first of all commandments—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind"—requires for its fulfilment an understanding of God which can be attained only by sustained thought. The love of God with the mind is not essential to salvation, but this command cannot be fulfilled without it. Two sons of a king might love their father with equal affection, while but one of them took an intelligent interest in all the affairs pertaining to his father's position. This one alone would love with the mind. Only in recent times has scientific research made it possible to fulfil this part of the commandment. The modern view of an immanent God, replacing the cruder views of the past, contains a revelation which invests life with a new meaning. The gospel which the Salvation Army preaches on the street is based on a conception of God's attitude of anger toward man, which has arisen from man's own guilty feelings. While it contains a part of the truth, and has proven powerful for the salvation of many, its conception of God is unworthy of Him. The more scientific view makes it clear that God was never estranged from man, and leads to such a conception of Him that man can enter into intelligent relations with Him.—G. A. B.]

Speaking as a member of the Religious Society of Friends to a Company composed mainly of fellow members, notice may well be taken of the great change indicated by the recurrence of these conferences (this being the third in about eight years); a change of

view in regard to the place held by the mind in the development of the religious life.

Prior to the recent past, there was, as we know, no recognized place amongst us, for the earnest logical thought of trained minds in assisting the growth of the life Godward, other than that which dealt purely with the moral and redemptive relations of the soul to God and Christ.

The true sphere of the spiritual life was believed to be confined to the will and the affections, in distinction from the activities of the mind. The corporate judgment of the Society continued loyal to that conception of truth, and of a right qualification for the ministry of the Gospel, which was contained in the challenge thrown down by George Fox to the religious sentiment of his day, with which we are familiar: "The Lord showed me, that being bred at Oxford, or Cambridge, was not enough to qualify men to be ministers of Christ."

Nothing has occurred since then to invalidate the essential truth of this statement.

The history of "Quakerism" is conclusive

evidence of the realization of the divinely promised all-sufficiency of the spirit of Christ for teaching and for guidance in the ministry of the Word when its aid is sought and relied upon. The ministry so exercised and the concurrent operation of the same Inward Light in moulding the daily life of the membership, resulted jointly in a good degree of approximation to the Gospel standard. This fact has been distinctly recognized by the Church at large.

I wish thus clearly to bear my testimony to the value of that reliance upon the guidance and teaching of the Holy Spirit, which has been the distinctive characteristic of Quakerism from its origin. I do so because a recognition of the important relation of the mind to the spiritual life is now unavoidable, in considering the new outlook of religious thought and its relation to the past. It is, however, only such *added* use of the mind, as Barclay and Pennington, if alive, would approve of.

It is undeniable that a great change is in progress in religious thought, originating mainly

in new conceptions of God, with new views of the relation between God and man flowing therefrom.

The significance of this change is universally recognized, and the sympathy and opposition aroused by it are very positive. Some are repelled by it, and believe that it could add nothing to the peace they already enjoy, in faithful adherence to the teachings early implanted in godly homes. With these, the authority of the teaching at the mother's knee outweighs, "The testimony of the rocks."

Many earnest minds, however, have been brought under much embarrassment, being both interested and repelled. They have been impressed by the presentation of familiar truth in new light, or of newly alleged truth, bearing upon the life of faith. They can neither accept nor deny the truth of what is presented, nor can they dismiss the interest it arouses; an interest distressingly heightened by the consciousness that confirmation of that which thus appeals to them seems to threaten the foundations upon which their faith has built.

It is to this class especially that these reflections are addressed upon the important question, which probably expresses their mental attitude, viz.: Does the acceptance of the new thought's teaching require us to break with the past, and turn our backs upon important features of the old theology with its cherished associations?

I have much sympathy with this difficulty. Before I could *see* relief from it for myself, I felt there *must* be some point of view from which the real harmony of all could be seen. Should we not expect essential harmony between all that is really the truth of God? Can that which the microscope reveals about God's nature and His handiwork in creation, really conflict with that which the soul has experienced of the knowledge of God in another region of life?

In reflecting upon this subject in the light of the unity of all truth, a few considerations presented themselves to my mind, which I found to be helpful to myself. I have thought, therefore, that as they might be helpful also to others, it would be suitable on this occasion

to offer them as, "Reflections upon the Relation of Past and Present Day Religious Thought."

Under the operation of what has been termed the basic "law of progressive intelligence," it is evident that in the past half century, an important stage was reached in the onward progress of the human mind. Self-consciousness in man, that unique attribute which differentiates him from all else in creation, was more insistently searching into the true character of its own nature and its relation to creation.

By the new light upon the nature of God and man in which it is our privilege now to live, we are getting much insight into some of the mysteries of life, including the problems of "free will," and of the existence of evil, and how the latter could be permitted by a God infinite both in power and in love; problems utterly insoluble so long as the thoughts of men were controlled by anthropomorphic conceptions of God. In this light upon the past, we can understand the meaning of man's age-long wrestling with the mysteries which surrounded him, as with "clouds and thick darkness." We see that the struggle

for fuller light, was, in reality, the effort of the latent and potentially Divine in man to come into conscious realization.

Therefore, the unrest which pervades the religious world to-day is not, when rightly viewed, an adequate cause for the anxiety with which it is regarded by many. On the contrary, it is really a ground for encouragement. It is simply the ferment which attends and evidences the introduction of new life. It means, that the conceptions of the past on some important points are no longer able to satisfy the growing requirements of the soul. Especially does it mean, that the note of the infinite has been heard by man and its touch has impressed the depths of his soul, that temple wherein dwells the "High and Holy One Who inhabiteth Eternity."

Hence, those who are consciously in the light of modern religious thought see in it a self-revelation of God, second only in importance to that which attended the introduction of the Gospel dispensation. Yet it differs therefrom distinctly in the fact, that the new light of the

present and its revelations are addressed primarily and mainly to man's intellectual nature. Hence the unrest in the Church to-day is only an intellectual in distinction from a moral unrest. There is no evidence that the attitude toward moral truth is unfavorably affected. On the contrary, instead of being weakened, the sanctions of the Divine will affecting life and conduct are receiving surer confirmation, with more refined, and positive, and far-reaching applications.

The distinction between the moral and the intellectual in man's spiritual life and education has not received the attention which its relation to current changes in religious thought would justify. While this will receive more distinct attention at a subsequent point in the line of thought, it should be observed here that the spiritual history of each regenerated life mus be primarily a moral history. With this as esential, there may or may not be connected an intellectual quality more or less marked. The former, the moral character, is, of course, the important one. When it expresses the honest

purpose to accept the Divine will as the rule of life, it becomes the essential of salvation in its simplest aspect, as the continuance of life beyond the grave. With the great majority of the members of the Church, this, the moral relation to God, is the only one which characterizes their spiritual life. The progress of religious *thought*, and the subjects arising out of the relations of faith and science, so interestingly presented in contemporary religious literature, has, for them, but little attraction.

In view of the warning furnished by infidels, and often, as supposed by men of science, it is not surprising that the feeling should have prevailed in the past to a considerable extent, that mental research into the mysterious, and, as assumed, the unknowable nature of God, was fraught with danger to the faith and peace of the trustful follower of Christ.

Yet the first commandment, whose importance was so strongly stated by our Saviour, cannot be really fulfilled without a knowledge of God with the mind.

There is a manifest distinction in the different

forms of the love of God enjoined by the first commandment. One relates to the love with the mind, or the intellectual nature. The others relate to the affections and the will, or the emotional nature. The latter, which is the love with the "heart, and soul, and strength," involves only ordinary mental exercise. The former, however, or love with the mind, requires earnest sustained thought.

As the love of God with the mind is not essential to salvation, it is manifestly the less important of the several forms of love noted in the commandment. While it has an important place in helpful reaction upon the will and the affections, yet it is as something added. By its own essential limitations it can, indeed, be truly experienced only *subsequent* to that all important knowledge of God, which comes through the emotional nature by repentance and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

The only condition of spiritual life and salvation is loyalty to Christ,—the faithful following of the Light. This, the "way," is so plain and simple, that "the wayfaring man, though

a fool, need not err therein." Yet not inconsistent with this is the assertion, that without the love of God with the mind, the first commandment cannot be fulfilled.

For it is manifest that the command to love God with the mind (not merely to admire and love the manifestations of His power and wisdom in the visible creation), when joined with the command to love Him also with the "heart and soul and strength," can mean nothing else than to love Him intelligently, that is with the mind, as distinct from the love which is exercised through the emotional nature; and, to love God with the mind, there must be a knowledge of Him *with the mind*.

Two broadly marked types of Divine sonship result from the love and knowledge of God in the two general forms above stated, and the distinction has its analogy in earthly relations. We can imagine a ruler, of large power and estate, with two sons. The affectionate and dutiful relation of each to the father is all that a parent could wish. One son, however, develops a mental activity and interest in all the affairs

of his father's position. It is manifest that an added bond, a bond of intelligent sympathy, would exist between the father and that son, while the essential filial relation, that of love, would be complete with both.

The necessity for the knowledge and love of God with the mind, for the fulfilment of the first commandment, brings to view the importance of the revelation of God now in progress, whereby such a conception of Him is presented, as makes possible a love with the mind.

Not until very recent years was there any recognized conception of God, other, be it noted, than that growing out of His moral government—upon which the mind would care to dwell. It was unintelligent, confused and contradictory. The Divine attributes of omniscience, omnipresence and omnipotence were acknowledged because they were the teachings of Scripture. But their real significance and any intelligent perception of their relation to man, or in general to Divine creative power in contrast, that is, with belief in creation by

Divine fiat,—all this was controlled and shaped, or more accurately, it was confused and practically stultified by the crystallized thought of centuries. But it could not have been otherwise, for there was really nothing available for a constructive thought of God with which to replace the crude ideas of Him, springing from human experience.

Nor could this be corrected until through the researches of science in many directions, exact and cumulative knowledge was obtained of the ways of God in creation, and light was thereby thrown on the Divine nature.

As a consequence of this knowledge gained by science and interpreted by faith, we now have a consistent, constructive, philosophic idea of God. It is one which addresses itself acceptably both to faith and to reason. It is a conception which finds in the Divine immanence (hitherto irreconcilable by the human mind with the Divine transcendence), a revelation which invests life with new meaning and inexpressible richness. The soul which has really entered into the light thus revealed cannot dis-

miss the truth from which it flows. The vision of God thus brought to view cannot be unseen. It is described, it seems to me, by the term, the philosophy of the Divine.

The conception of God which has been presented, joined with the present-day view of the work of Christ in man's salvation, contrasts strongly with what we would hear at the street corner upon the same subjects, where the "Salvation Army" lass is earnestly appealing to a little company, representing "the man in the street."

We know the form of the Gospel message we would hear. It would be substantially in accord with the teaching of the medieval painting referred to below, i. e., the propitiation of God by the sacrifice of Christ.

The contrast centers around the supremely interesting subject of salvation, and brings into view impressively, and as nothing else can, the radical character of the change in thought which marks the present period in religious history. The full significance of the contrast is worthy of most careful consideration.

During the last few decades thoughtful minds have been rejecting, as inconsistent with the teaching of Christ, any view of the Atonement which is based upon the existence of anger in God, or upon His need of a judicial equivalent in satisfaction of Divine justice for the violation of law.

And yet, that is the form of the Gospel proclaimed at the street corner, and still showing its converting, gathering power. It is undeniably the main influence by which the progress of the Church thus far has been attained. By it has been the momentum developed, which apparently assures the ultimate subjection of the world to the Cross of Christ. Thus the Gospel has proved itself, "the power of God unto salvation," notwithstanding its association in Christian consciousness with a conception of God unworthy of Him, and repellent to all reasonable ideas of a Divine Fatherhood.

The confusion of thought thus resulting, and agitating the religious world, is traceable to two influences. The principal cause arises from a disregard of the distinction between the

moral and the intellectual in relation to the spiritual life. Connected with this,—and growing out of the advance of knowledge, a secondary cause is found in man's capacity by nature for a dual consciousness toward some facts of the spiritual as well as the physical world. This arises through his actual relation to the finite and his *potential* relation to the infinite.

Some facts of the *physical* universe are apprehended very differently according as we are impressed by their apparent or their actual relation to us. To Copernicus we are indebted for the discovery of the difference between that which is constructively true or relative truth, and truth which is ultimate or absolute. The most familiar illustration of this dual sense, as regards the physical universe, is seen in the daily rising of the sun. We say the sun rises. Constructively, this is true. Absolutely, it is not true,—for the sun is stationary. Its apparent rise is caused by our change of position with the revolving earth.

In the *spiritual* world man has a correspondingly dual thought or consciousness of God,

according to whether his apprehension of Him is in the light of relative or absolute truth.

Under the influence of conscious alienation because of sin man believes that God is averse from him and angry. In time he sees this to have been only constructively true, or a relative truth; the actual and absolute truth being that God never was angry with him nor needed to be turned toward him in love. Pardon for sin has ever existed,—the only condition of its enjoyment by man being his entrance into a consciousness of it through a change of heart and will. It is a change of *his* attitude, and not a change in God.

Recurring to the principal cause of the existing confusion, it may be stated more fully as a disregard of the distinction between the knowledge of God by the moral sense, through the exercise of the will and the emotions, and that added knowledge of God which is obtainable by the intellectual faculty. Both of these forms of the knowledge of God have their distinct spheres of exercise. While each has an influence that the other cannot supply, and both

are essential for the complete fulfilment of "the first and great commandment," yet it is evident that until very recently only the knowledge of God by the moral sense had any part in man's spiritual development. Nothing had been contributed by purely mental research into the nature of God.

Nor was there apparently any need for the philosophic knowledge of Divine things in order to realize the primary purpose of the Gospel. For the Gospel has both a primary and an ultimate purpose. The truth taught for all time by our Saviour, as also by the first commandment, has its deep as well as its simple meaning. Christ's teaching was, and still is, constant and unchanging in its appeal to the moral sense. Joined with the influence of His personality, it was effective in establishing, among those with whom He mingled, the simple faith, whose control honestly accepted in daily life and conduct, resulted in conscious sonship to God in Him. This continuing influence and its still increasing results constitute the primary purpose of the Gospel. Yet that same Gospel

teaching has now a deeper meaning which was inaccessible to those to whom it was first addressed. Seen in the light of the present philosophic knowledge of the Divine, that teaching makes an appeal to the spiritually intelligent mind of the most intensely interesting nature, involving as it does the relation of the finite human mind to the infinite universal mind. An entirely new conception of this relation was made possible when the idea of creation by Divine fiat was replaced by the scientific truth that all forms of life, animate and inanimate, are orderly expressions of the infinite universal mind, with which man only can enter consciously into intelligent relations.

CHAPTER II.

Divine Immanence and Divine Forgiveness.

[*Outline of the Argument.*—The conception of God as a far-away Creator outside of all phenomena has for thoughtful minds forever passed away. The theology to which that conception gave rise is illustrated by a painting in which God is represented as a colossal man, hurling shafts of lightning, which Christ catches and diverts from the offending sinner. Of this type were the theologies of Calvin and Edwards. Astronomy, geology, biology and psychology are the sciences which have brought about the new view of God and of man's relation to Him. God is seen to be at once immanent and transcendent, infinite and personal, a Sovereign but also a Father and a Friend.

The Divine immanence has been experienced by many in whose habitual thought God is regarded as far away. Through the atonement of Christ union with God has existed in the heart along with a sense of the far-offness of God in the mind. Science has corrected this mental picture. It makes clear the immanence of God and His personality, and leads the mind to the daring thought of the consubstantiality of God and man.

Man has the capacity to enter into relation with God. Man's heart is, however, impregnable even to God until man himself opens it to his Creator. When he thus voluntarily welcomes God, the highest possibilities open before him. In proportion as the soul dwells in God it realizes its own

selfhood; sin and disease vanish and the Divine becomes incarnate in the human.

This view differs from the Salvation Army type of gospel, but it contains all of that which is true, and much more. It should, therefore, lead to a higher type of Christian life.

Sin creates a consciousness of estrangement from God. Man feels himself unworthy, and disbelieves the possibility of forgiveness. How can the conviction of God's mercy be brought about in him? Mere words could not accomplish this; forgiveness must become incarnate. This it did in Christ. The living fact of His appearance in the realm of sin conveys the assurance of the forgiveness of sin. The whole range of effects that have issued from him also play their part in the work. In human forgiveness, if it is real, the forgiver must understand the painful condition from which relief was sought. In the high realm of Divine forgiveness there is vastly greater need of intelligent sympathy on the part of the Forgiver. *The Divine Forgiver will, therefore, be the Divine Sufferer.*—G. A. B.]

It has been well said that, "civilizations differ according to the conception of God which shines over them," and History shows the truth of the statement.

The advance of knowledge through accurate, scientific research, with conclusions that are indisputable, has forever destroyed for thoughtful minds the conceptions of the past, which regarded God as a far-away Creator, and out-

side of all phenomena. Nothing could more conduce to deliberate atheism than inability to find a conception of God in harmony with what is now known of creation, both closely around us, and in the universe at large.

In the thought of God which controlled the mind until very recent time, He was regarded after the manner of a greatly exaggerated man, with infinite powers, yet with likes and dislikes largely according to the human order. He was supposed to have created the earth with its inhabitants by His fiat, or as a watch-maker constructs a watch, and then to have withdrawn to a distant heaven of unknown location, there to watch the progress of life and affairs on the earth, and thence to interfere by His Spirit, or other agencies, when interference was regarded as needful.

Above all else, and peculiarly significant, was the conception of His relation to man. The prevailing idea on this subject, which existed for fully one thousand years, is expressed in a painting now in one of the European galleries. In this picture God appears as a man of colossal size

wrathfully casting shafts of lightning, which Christ is shown as catching and diverting from their object, offending man.

We are familiar with the Calvinistic idea of God which so long characterized Presbyterianism. It, as also the theology of Jonathan Edwards, which had large influence in New England about a hundred years ago, was controlled by peculiar ideas of the Divine sovereignty, unbalanced by even human thoughts of a Divine Fatherhood. In illustration of this, I quote briefly from a sermon, entitled, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," by Jonathan Edwards: "There will be no end to the exquisite, horrible misery. The inhabitants of heaven and all the universe will look on and praise God's justice. No prayer will mitigate God's hate and contempt, for He can no longer pity. You would have gone to hell last night, had He not held you like a loathsome spider over the flame by a thread. Every moment of delay accumulates wrath."

It would be unkind to refer to this, disconnected from the fact that even with *it* is asso-

ciated the record of many Christ-like lives as shown in the rare piety of Edwards himself. It has also its legitimate interest for us as a feature of Church history, in connection with the course of religious thought. It serves also a good purpose in the contrast it reveals with the conception of God which is now shedding its uplifting, inspiring light, though as yet, only in the early morning hours of its day.

It would take me much too far afield,—were it within the scope of my purpose, and had I the ability for it,—to trace at all closely the different lines of scientific research and thought which have resulted in the present-day idea of creation and its Creator.

Not until science had largely established the doctrine of evolution was firm ground found for a constructive thought of God.

Geology with its evidence of the great antiquity of our earth, had, in the early half of the last century, unsettled confidence in the accepted account of creation given in Genesis. The tendency to reject the truth of that account was greatly increased by the Darwinian theory

of Evolution, followed not long after by the illuminating spiritual interpretation which Drummond gave to the principles of Biology. These influences greatly stimulated further search for scientific knowledge bearing upon the Divine order in creation.

In addition to geology, the researches of the microscope into the processes of life were specially effective. Astronomy and the solar spectrum added their contributions. Psychology, later on, confirmed conclusions already indicated, and by its researches into the subject of "personality," *greatly* added to the knowledge about the soul and its relations to God.

The converging light of these and other researches, and the formulation of principles underlying the facts thus brought to light by science and interpreted by faith, filled with new meaning the recognized attributes of God—omnipresence, omnipotence, and omniscience; the latter understood as an ever-present, all-pervading intelligence, or consciousness, rather than knowledge gained by observation.

The following summary idea is from an essay

on "The Immanent God," by Horatio W. Dresser:

"Life, all life, all that holds it together and links it with the eternal forces of the universe, is a continuous, Divine communication. There is no separation between our own souls and that Spirit in whom, in the most literal sense, 'we live and move, and have our being,' —between the world in which we live, and that eternal Reality of whose substance and of whose activity it is a part. The life which sleeps in the rock, dreams in the plant, and awakens to consciousness in man, is one great life. The sea, the sky, the mountains, trees, flowers,—all reveal God. All serious thinkers are feeling after Him. All point through different forms of expression to the conception of a Divine Father, which I have tried to make clear as it appears to me; namely, that He is nature, yet more than nature; personal, yet more than person; on the one hand, the great unit, omnipresent force and substance whence all things and beings proceed, infinite, unknown, transcendent, indefinable, in a sense impersonal;

on the other hand relatively personal, known, finite, immanent; an intelligent power, large enough to be the author of all life, and near enough so that Jesus could name Him Father, and so that we can perceive His activity in our daily lives; an omnipresent Reality, whose complete nature is revealed in the total universe, and so much, also, as we can comprehend of it, in our own lives; a Spirit which has no form, but which all forms reveal; a Friend Who is just as near to us in this present moment as in the countless aeons of eternity of which this fleeting moment is an integrant part."

Marked as is the change in the thought of God, equally so is the corresponding change in the thought of man.

We are familiar with the confusion which has met us when we have tried to form some intelligent idea of man's actual relation to God, other than the purely moral one, an idea which would reasonably harmonize with experience and revelation through Christ.

The profound truth of the Divine immanence may have been experienced, while yet in the

habitual, spontaneous thought, God would be regarded as far away. The record that God "*sent*" His Spirit to deal with man, would seem suitably to express the fact. A conscious, joyful union with God through the atonement of Christ has existed in the heart, along with a sense of the far-offness of God in the mind. If, also, we would note our mental processes, we would probably find that the important truth of the Trinity encouraged unconsciously the idea of separation. This could hardly fail to be strengthened by all that lends the idea of objective reality to the anger of God, and by His change of attitude because of the mediation of Christ and His propitiatory death.

This confusion surrounding the thought of God is due to the fact, already noticed, that there has hitherto been nothing to supersede it upon which the mind could rest; and also to the fact, that it seemed impossible to associate with the infinite, incorporeal life which fills the universe, any idea of "personality," such as human relations suggest.

Again, it is to science that faith is indebted

for light upon the important subject of personality, and through it, upon the nature of the personal relation between man and God. Its importance and supreme interest resulted in the establishment, within the last two decades, of the scientific department of psychology, the science of the soul, or "personality." Soul and personality are largely convertible terms, personality being the purest expression of the essential life, the soul, i. e., the Ego.

The light which dispelled the anthropomorphic ideas of the past, with its thought of God as afar off, is replacing it with a conception, in which creation is seen as an unfolding and self-manifestation of the Almighty Creative Mind in infinitely varied forms of progressive intelligence,—ascending gradations of life and structure from zoophyte to man.

In the operation of this formative power of mind, untold ages were required for the production of the material body of man, the crown and apex of terrestrial life. It was man, "fearfully and wonderfully made," as the Psalmist declares of the human form; it was

man alone of all creation, who was to become qualified to visibly live and express the glory and beauty of the Lord, "and enjoy Him forever."

The teachings of Genesis read as blended fact and prophecy, with their account of the creation of man, were illuminated when the light of these truths was turned upon them. And these truths were themselves further illumined by the light shed upon *them* by the teaching of Christ.

Jointly then, they pointed to a oneness of God and man, more intimate and significant than the already recognized moral unity, which, however, can be the only sure foundation of the larger truth.

Thus, finally, the daring thought presented itself, of the "consubstantiality of God and man": a truth which has been declared to be the great discovery of the nineteenth century in the last quarter of which it was made.

This conception was the work of Science aided, and often guided by faith. A happy combination of the two is illustrated in the case of our friend, Rufus M. Jones, whose recent book,

"Social Law in the Spiritual World," ably and interestingly presents the idea of personality and person in its scientific sense. The idea of personality is meaningless apart from other personalities. This truth is most true in respect to that personality or self-consciousness, which blends, and is interwoven with the higher Self, the eternal life in us. This is "the light which lighteth every man who cometh into the world." Only thus can be explained the great cardinal verities of being, which potentially exist in man.

The record in Genesis gives two accounts of the creation of man. In their contrast, one refers simply to the making of man, and the other adds that, "God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." The first seems to indicate the creation of physical man, the animal; the other, the creation of the true man, the spiritual man, for only he could be even potentially the image of God. At what point the change occurred we cannot know, nor just what occurred in the definite act referred to as "breathing into man the breath of life." The evolutionist would explain it in

his way: many others, however, would regard it as a definite act of creative power; an act which took one form of life from its place in the terrestrial order and lifted it potentially into consciously intelligent relations with the infinite universe. With the latter view, I have cordial sympathy. In either view, the truth is equally clear that man became endowed with the capacity for the Godlike. Yet it was only the *capacity* for the Divine. It was the *ability* to know good and evil, and, as God says in Genesis, "to become as one of us"; that is, man entered into the possession of the moral sense "knowing good and evil." This is a most significant and far-reaching truth. In this connection I heard, some fifteen years ago, at a place of summer resort, a sermon by a very spiritually minded man, whose acquaintance I made and enjoyed until his death soon afterward. One point in his sermon has rested specially with me, and has often been helpfully recalled. He compared the heart of man,—that is, the inmost life of man,—to a fortress, impregnable even to the Creator of the universe. He, the Almighty,

could destroy it, but He could not possess it, unless by the invitation of its occupant. Infinite love and infinite power could only plead as a suppliant for admission, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock"; "My son, my daughter, give me thy heart."

As already stated, man was endowed with the capacity for the Godlike—he is potentially Divine. That was all that God could give man, or that man could receive. The bringing of the potential into realization depended upon man himself. It means the gradual formation of character through the choice between good and evil: the habit of preferring good when evil could have been chosen. The continuance of the habit means the formation of character. Personality, when thus seen in its true significance, becomes clothed with solemn possibilities.

By the inbreathing of the Divine life, man became a secondary creator, a creator with derived power. With him rests the power of choice. He can either co-operate with his higher self and grow into, and in the Divine; or he can turn away from the Spirit of life and

gravitate downward, becoming more and more "earthly, sensual, devilish." He may be,—we know he has been and is,—the creator of evil, which with its consequences is a fearful reality. Man's power of evil, with its limitless possibilities for exercise, is amply adequate to account for the endless varieties of evil and its actual consequences throughout a creation which proceeded from the infinite God, and was pronounced "good." Thus light is thrown not only upon the problem of evil and its continuance, in this true apprehension of the relation of man to God; but also upon the problem of the freedom of the will. Its solution is seen in the illustration of the fortress above referred to. It is well expressed in Tennyson's lines,

> "Our wills are ours, we know not how,
> Our wills are ours, to make them Thine."

The antithesis of past and present religious thought is most marked in the conceptions of God and man. These have already been presented separately. The idea of the "consubstantiality of God and man," which flows from

them is a composite idea, sufficiently distinct to invite expression by itself.

I venture, therefore, to present such a statement. It brings together, somewhat as a mosaic, various thoughts of others which I came across a few years since, and fused into a comprehensive thought of God and man unitedly. I present it in the form of an invocation which I have found helpful:

Thou, Oh! God, art the all-inclusive Reality, and infinite principle of life! Thou art the one and only all-comprehensive Mind; immortal, all conscious, ever-present, all-powerful. Thou art infinite, pure, perfect, eternal truth which can not change; truth which is everlastingly and inseparably interwoven with infinite, changeless life and love. Being infinite love, thou art the only real Creator. Who never did, or could create sin or disease, which are the phenomena of the human mind, and not of Divine origin. Thou, Oh! God, art everlastingly the Author of life, and of goodness not sin, of health not disease, conditions which do not proceed from divine law, but are annulled thereby. In proportion as we dwell in this Christly sense of Thee and of the real man as Thy image and reflection, we do realize our true Selfhood in Thy likeness, and therewith a consciousness of Thy presence and power. This consciousness of Thee, Oh! God, Thy presence and power, is the real Godman. It is the continuing re-incarnation of the Divine in us.

This seems pretty far off, does it not, from the

preaching we may hear at the street corner where the Salvation Army lass is pouring out her soul to a little company, representing the "man in the street?" We know the form of Gospel proclamation we would hear. It would be substantially in harmony with the teaching of the mediæval picture already referred to, viz., the propitiation of God by the sacrifice of Christ. Yet, that is undoubtedly the message of "glad tidings," upon which the Church has been built thus far, and is still showing its converting, gathering power. And if the speaker appealed to me for the truth of her teaching, I am thankful for the comprehensive light in which I can see, not only the absolute, infinite truth back of her words, but also the constructive and relative truth which she presents.

And so, I could reply to her, "Yes, my friend, my sister-in-Christ, it is true! It is as true as that the sun rose this morning." As I walk away from that street corner, the thought presents itself, "What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and Godliness," when, to the attractive power of Christ as a

Saviour from the "wrath of God," is now added a conception of God, which, replacing the repellant ideas of the past, transforms all life, bringing us into a sense of kinship with the very springs of life, and beauty in the infinite world close around us, and even encouraging us to feel at home with the grandeur of the infinite universe itself.

There is now, as hitherto, a wide diversity of view regarding the nature of Christ and His work. In the view with which I have sympathy the difference between past and present thought on this all-important subject relates to the character of the influence which flows from the atoning death of Christ, and the object to whom it is directed. These changes, with, also, the nature of the secret attraction which results in penitential love to Christ, are set forth most satisfactorily, in an article by Ambrose Bennett, which appeared some years ago in an English periodical, upon "Forgiveness of Sin." In presenting it I shall condense as much as possible.

Sin, he says, is its own penalty. (He treats the subject entirely with regard to the soul under conviction for sin, and seeking relief from its burden.)

The punishment of sin is self-executing, and lies primarily in the fact, that the sense of estrangement to God, which it creates, compels us to think that He is unable to enter into communion with us; in other words, that it is impossible for Him to forgive us. We are unable to believe in the divine mercy to us.

This inner consequence of sin is a constant element in Christian experience. When Peter, in the first moment of his new-born conviction of sin cried out, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" it was because he saw the distance between himself and his sinless Lord, and could not conceive how across that distance, communion was possible. The sense of his unworthiness obliged him to disbelieve in the possibility of forgiveness. This is no singular phenomenon, but a normal feature of Christian experience, as proved by the persistence, in its successive forms, of the doctrine of the atonement.

Thus, not merely forgiveness, but the consciousness of forgiveness of sin, is the central factor in the experience of the change desired. When, therefore, the certainty of God's mercy and love has been brought home to the burdened soul, it is like the recovery of sight to the blind, and the resurrection of the dead.

The author then enquires how this conviction of God's mercy and love can be brought about. It is evident that before this assurance can be complete, the sinner's conviction must be removed, that it is impossible for him who has transgressed against infinite holiness to enter into communion with the Holy One. In short, he must be convinced that what he feels to be impossible has become possible. How can this be accomplished?

It could not be brought about by persuasive words or arguments. The mere proclamation that God forgives would not do it, for it is precisely this that the sinner can not credit. The parable of the Prodigal Son on a piece of paper would not do it. The mere telling of the possibility of redemption will not correct the

impressions, self-suggested, regarding the relation of the finite creature to the infinite Creator, a relation seen by the sinner only in the condemning light of his own consciousness of sin, and his self-repulsion from holiness.

One thing, and one only, will avail: *Forgiveness must be mediated, and become incarnate that it may effect the assurance of forgiveness.*

There must be the actual spectacle in history of that very association with sin which was thought impossible. That which in the time of estrangement from God, it was believed could never occur, has occurred. On this very earth, Holiness entered into association with sin,—a Holy One made Himself the companion of sinners, lived and died for their sakes. The impossible took place. Both the righteousness of God, and the mercy of God become to us realities in Christ. It is the living fact of Christ's appearance in the realm of sin that His Spirit uses, to convey to us the assurance of the forgiveness of sin.

It is not, however, the historical person only that does this for us; the whole range of effects

that have issued from Him play their part in the work. No fact is more certain than that those in whom our Lord has most nearly lived again, are the people who have possessed at once the deepest sense of the gravity of sin and the intensest love and pity for the sinner. Their Christianity has flowered in nothing so royally as in their passion to redeem the "dead in trespasses and sins." In them, though in fainter outline, the original spectacle is repeated, and again and again in the lives of the choicest spirits of Christendom, we have seen Holiness and Love go hand in hand down the "via dolorosa" in search of the lost.

In the structure of the article now presented, the writer examines first, as we have just seen, what passes in the consciousness of the forgiven. Now he turns to the Mediator or revealer of that forgiveness, and reverently seeks to understand what is involved in *his* experience.

The writer finds light upon this in the relations between man and man. The case is most nearly parallel when a highly developed and sensitive nature has grievously wounded

a fellow-man, perhaps his friend, also of high character. The injurer desires forgiveness. How is his desire to be satisfied? We can well understand that the mere words of pardon formally and coldly expressed, in response to his acknowledgment of wrong and request for pardon, could not satisfy him. He can be satisfied and relieved of his distress of mind, just in proportion as he feels assured that he of whom he asks pardon, understands the meaning of his request, and the need that prompts him to make it. It must be made clear to the burdened conscience that the forgiver understands the weight of the burden, and realizes the painful condition from which relief was sought.

Now we realize the pain of another, only when we have made it our own. Our consolation becomes helpful just in proportion as we have made real in our own consciousness the grief we would lighten. It is not otherwise with the Forgiveness of Sin; except that in that high region of experience there is vastly greater need for intelligent sympathy on the part of the

Forgiver. As, therefore, every desire for forgiveness springs from the pressure of an inner distress, so every response of the forgiver, if effectual, must issue from one by whom that distress has been realized and shared. *The Divine Forgiver therefore will be the Divine Sufferer.*

CHAPTER III.

THE VALUE AND THE DANGERS OF THE NEW KNOWLEDGE.

[*Outline of the Argument.*—Not at once can we feel at home with the philosophical thought of God and of man's relation to Him which has been presented in the previous chapters. Oneness with Christ has not seemed to the Christian oneness with the Godhead. Although this new teaching is in accordance with the Gospel of John and is presented with surpassing boldness by the Epistle to the Ephesians, it seems at first to be lacking in humility. Humility is, however, dependence on a higher power, and is all the better when it is intelligent dependence.

In this larger knowledge there is nothing which should depreciate the work of Christ. Current literature shows, however, that there is reason for anxiety as to the preservation of the evangelical faith. Sympathy with this anxiety is the controlling motive of this paper.

One of the errors of the time is the undervaluation of sin. Even if sin were only the absence of light, the consequences of darkness constitute a real danger. Another error is the abnormally exalted estimate of man. The new view does invest him with worth and dignity, but only when he is recreated in Christ.

Such a change as is now in progress could not but be accompanied by extravagant and unbalanced statements. Such incidental results have accompanied all God's great

revelations. The new knowledge makes an appeal to the spiritual intelligence. It is not surprising, therefore, that for a time undue emphasis should be given to the mind in its relation to God.

The only change of importance other than intellectual relates to the Atonement. The view that it is enough to *think* rightly of Christ is passing away. It is clear that only Christlikeness in character can render one acceptable to God. No new statement of belief accordingly is possible, for it would not appeal to all grades of intelligence. The basis of unity must in the future be ethical. Some theories hold that the highest goodness may be attained by development; in reality it is only attained when our real rebellion is acknowledged and forgiven in Christ.

In consequence of the exclusive observation of certain aspects of science doubts are created as to the personality of God, and the conviction grows that there is nothing which is not under the control of law.—G. A. B.]

Not at once, nor until we have dwelt with it for a time, can we feel at home with the philosophic thought of God which has been presented, and man's place in relation thereto. Although we have long been familiar with the teaching of the oneness of the believer with Christ, yet we find ourselves lifted, as it were, into unfamiliar relations with the Godhead, when we are told that, if really regenerated in Christ, we are in varying degree finite expres-

sions and individualizations of the Most High —God—rays of the Divine!

Although this is essentially in harmony with our Saviour's teaching in the fourth Gospel, and while, also, it is transcended by Paul in Ephesians IV, yet it at first shocks sensibilities which we intuitively feel are grounded in a properly subject relation of the creature to the infinite Creator. This, I believe to be a desirable, and the only normal, experience. Humility rightly pertains to the conscious approach of the finite to the infinite. Yet it must be a true humility, not merely the prostration of the mind before God as an unknown, and essentially unknowable Almightiness.

The humility which the Gospel inculcates is dependence upon a higher power, and better is it, when it is also a consciously intelligent dependence. This conscious dependence grows only out of that experimental knowledge of God in which the life center is changed from self to Christ. It normally attends the experience through which the soul passes on becoming reconciled to God through Christ. When the

burden of sin and the unrest of separation from Him has been removed, the relation of the creature to the Creator becomes one of humility and penitential love. An intensely personal relation to Christ is created, which nothing else can produce. It is the conscious Sonship to God in Him, which is the ultimate purpose and most exalted fact of life, to the reality of which, increasing testimony has been borne through all the centuries since Christ.

Nor is there anything incident to the larger knowledge of the true relation between God and man made possible in the present day, which, in itself, would depreciate the value of the impressive fact just stated, and the Evangelical sentiment which supports it.

Yet it is useless to ignore the evidence revealed by a moderate acquaintance with current religious literature,—especially that appearing in periodical form,—which shows that there *is* reason for watchful anxiety for the preservation of evangelical faith. My sympathy, my earnest, cordial sympathy with that feeling, is the controlling motive of the present effort.

One or two erroneous tendencies in religious thought are specially noticeable at the present time. It seems surprising, yet sadly interesting, that not a little serious discussion should have been elicited upon the question, whether there is really such a thing as sin? The negative of this proposition is supported by an unwarranted inference from the truth, that as God is all in all, the all comprehensive Reality of existence, and the only Creator, and as it is unthinkable that He could have created sin, hence evil is not a positive entity; that it is only the absence of good, just as darkness is unreal because it is but the absence of light. This could deceive only those who invite deception. A London fog is only the absence of light, yet its consequences in disorder and actual danger are as real, and need to be guarded against as fully as though the fog were a positive objective entity. A stronger support for the truth is found in the fact already stated, that man is a secondary creator, and amply able to create actual evil; with power also to resist the influences for good which would tend to overcome and dispel sin.

Another error shows itself in an abnormally exalted estimate of man. It is a reaction from the doctrine of original sin, total depravity, and its related teaching of the inherent worthlessness of man. The present day thought *does* invest man with worth and dignity because of his capacity for godlikeness: but it is only the man recreated in Christ and conscious of his dependence upon Him, to whom such value can be ascribed. (I have at hand, to be introduced later, an illustration of what has just been alluded to.) Jointly, these influences are a menace, though I cannot believe a serious menace, to the cause of religion, in that they militate against the invaluable virtue of humility and the blessing of penitential love.

We should, however, recognize the fact that such a change as is now in progress in religious thought could not fail to be attended with extravagant and unbalanced statements and unwarranted conclusions. Reactions from the misapprehensions of the past must be reckoned with. Such incidental results have ever characterized the reception of the great revelations

of God. Yet it furnishes no ground for the depreciation of the value of the revelations themselves. Enlightened Christian consciousness, aided by the self-executing results of experience, will gradually be self-repelled from vagaries and misleading sophistries, and the pure truth will in time become crystallized.

The added knowledge of the present is primarily intellectual knowledge. The philosophic conception of God makes an appeal to the spiritual intelligence which is entirely new, and invites serious sustained thought. It is not, therefore, surprising that unusual, even undue, emphasis for a time, should be given to the place of mind in relation to the knowledge of God. Yet the only change of importance, other than purely intellectual, relates to the Atonement. This change, as already stated, is very marked, and attracts the most general interest. It is, however, of such a nature, as should really strengthen Evangelical sentiment and enforce its appeal.

The day is rapidly passing when serious

attention can be given to that conspicuous feature of the past which was expressed in the familiar hymn beginning with the verse:

> "What think ye of Christ? is the test
> To try both your state and your scheme;
> Ye cannot be right in the rest,
> Unless ye *think* rightly of Him."

Nothing could be more encouraging and indicative of true progress than the rapidly increasing acceptance of the truth, that not thought *about* Christ, but Christ-likeness of character is the only basis of acceptance with God. This is one of the unavoidable consequences of change incident to the advance of knowledge, pre-eminently that knowledge which relates to the nature of God. This has made permanently impossible the adoption of any new statement of belief which could be acceptable alike to all levels of spiritual intelligence. So that, henceforth, the only possible basis of true unity must be the ethical one, which involves the attitude of the will and the affections, as evidenced by the daily life and conduct.

Yet, while therefore we can apply only

the test of fellowship in Christ which He Himself laid down, i. e., the possession of His Spirit; and while, therefore, we feel also that there is no place in this connection for the use of the dividing words "truth" and "error"; yet we cannot ignore the fact that in the good, there may be the better. And this is, in fact, the distinction between that theory of humanity long familiar to us, which rests simply on the principle of development, and that theory supported by revelation which teaches the need of a change of *heart* for the fullest benefit of the Divine education of man as the offspring of God. This means that the ideal of Christianity as a life of sonship to God in Christ, and a personal communion of love, involves as an important element, the acknowledgment of sin,—ever a painful experience. This experience, "the theory of development would spare us; promising a bright future, while shedding no condemning light on the past." Yet this immunity could be purchased only at the expense of our self-delusion with the idea, that we, "have *not* rebelled against the Divine will, and that we

neither have been nor could be, other than that which the necessity of our being determined."

To see that it is right to love God and man, is to see that it was wrong ever to have been otherwise minded. For the realization of this consciousness, flagrant wickedness is not needful: the relation of finite imperfection to perfect purity, truth and love, is enough, seen in the humbling light of its own suggestions. Even when the idea of the "fall of man" is replaced by the theory of his evolution, the force of the above consideration is unimpaired. It would seem indeed to receive added weight; for, in lieu of guilt through the inherited transgression of Adam, there would be the conscious condemnation of failure to respond to invitations which are known to proceed from Divine Love. The actual condition of man spiritually, however reached, remains the same, and is the important point to be regarded. "Sin in its severest definition," has been declared to be forgetfulness of God. Therein, and unchanged, lies our relation to the truth that, "God com-

mended His love to us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Therefore, while conceding that all honest earnest dealing with God will have its corresponding blessing, yet true toleration does not relieve us from the equally binding obligation to maintain the practical distinction above outlined. For therein lies, as we believe, the richest blessing for others, as for ourselves, through its ability to promote the closest personal relation with God in Christ.*

Allusion was made a little way back, to the exaggerations incident to such a change of religious thought as is now occurring. Also, that one form of that exaggeration,—of which there is not infrequent evidence,—is the tendency to take an unduly exalted view of man, because of his potential union with the Divine,

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*All that is most valuable in the thoughts just expressed, in relation to the two divergent theories of humanity, I have condensed from "Thoughts on Revelation," by John McLeod Campbell. His writings have been so invaluable to me for thirty-five years, that I welcome this open opportunity to acknowledge the still existing obligation I owe to him.

—his oneness with the infinite, regardless of unfulfilled conditions requisite for such a relation.

The illustration of this, then promised, appeared in a magazine which came under my notice. It shows the possible consequences of attempting to "climb up some other way," into the "secret place of the Most High," than through Christ, the Door. It was in an article under the caption: "The Unrepentant: Affirmation." The writer skilfully lauds the man who is self-centered, independent, who regards "conscience as the greatest enemy the brooding mind of man ever raised up;" ridicules the idea of human responsibility, and repentance, and then asks, "What great soul would submit to that?"

I feel the need of purification of lips that have worded such sacrilegious sentiment; and I know what will purify them: "And Jesus, answering (Simon's unuttered thought), said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith Master, say on. And he turned to the woman and said unto Simon,

Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house; thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss; but this woman since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. Mine head with oil thou didst not anoint, but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore, I say unto thee, her sins which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little."

It is not surprising that history has fulfilled the prediction of our Saviour in connection with a similar anointing before His death, that, "Wheresoever this gospel is preached in the whole world, this shall be told as a memorial of her."

Into such a mystery of love, we can understand that the "Angels desire to look." Perhaps it is not a mere fancy of thought, that their inability to understand it, is because, as an ever sinless order of creation, they are unable to approach it by the only accessible path, the path of penitential love.

The advance of knowledge through the researches of science is attended by a possible disturbance of faith to which the cultivated mind is specially liable.

Who of us have not found, that long, thoughtful gazing into the starry depths, has not brought with it questionings which made us feel afresh and strongly the need of an unreasoning conviction of the truth of the *personality* of the infinite Creator? Have there not been times when the doubt of this would assail us? We would turn away from it, while yet conscious of its miasmatic influence. In the overwhelming sense of the immensity of the universe, could there be such a personal relation of God to us, as would correspond with even the figurative meaning of the words, "For the very hairs of your head are all numbered?"

With the larger knowledge brought by science, not only of the extent of creation, but also of the mysteries of life with which we are surrounded, comes also the more and more persistent claim of science, that there is nothing but the control of law, in every thing; and this

seems supported by almost continuous reports of destruction and suffering through the permitted activities of nature.

Under such influences, the thought easily arises, "What can there be of home for me in such a heaven as the scientist would invite me to, controlled by law, fixed, arbitrary, impersonal and self-executing?"

It was probably under such a compulsion of doubt as to the personality of the divine Fatherhood, that a college professor wrote the following verse Its reference to Mont Blanc was specially interesting to me, as I chanced to read it, nearly two years ago, just as I was coming into the view of that great mountain, which is obtained as Geneva is approached along the north bank of the lake:

"A God to whom I cannot pray!
Pray, what is he to me?
Mont Blanc is he, a star afar;
Pentelic marble;—Tigris clay—
Or iceberg in the sea."

CHAPTER IV.

A View of the Miraculous.

[*Outline of the Argument.*—The conviction just alluded to, that there is nothing that is not under the control of law, suitably introduces the subject of miracles. Formerly the miraculous had its place in attesting the divinity of Christ; it is now coming into notice in attesting the humanness of God. Science and faith, formerly at warfare on the subject, have now reached a *modus vivendi.* We accordingly invite science to consider the miraculous features of the Incarnation. What is the true theory of it? Science can throw no light here, for the requirements of the situation appeal not to reason but to love.

The soul needs God. It cries for Him; and just as a mother when her child cries disregards all law and decorum in order to meet its need, so God, to reveal His love, would disregard all law, all restraints. The self-sacrifice of the divine love in the Incarnation was made in such a way and attested by such circumstances as to impress the human mind with the Personality of God and with His love.

Two opposite necessities existed in the spiritual education of man—extended spiritual discipline in obedience to law, and some tangible, definite, easily apprehended object lesson, to connect the visible with the invisible world. The maximum of unchanging law has been joined with the minimum of its infraction. This infraction is, to the ordinary mind, necessary to prove the Personality of God. The Virgin

Birth, the Resurrection, the Ascension, the voice from heaven at the Baptism and on the Mount of Transfiguration point to agencies and a Personality in the invisible world.

An English Friend has recently declared that one whose religion is founded on a personal revelation to himself needs no "miracle-mongering" to convince him. This Friend belongs to the one per cent of scholarly minds whose intellectual union with God strengthens their moral union. But even he probably owes more to his former belief in miracles than he knows. Most minds need the miraculous, and with these he ought to have sympathy. To the average man the denial of miracles seems to make for a materialistic conception of the universe.

David Scull says, in substance, I feel, therefore, that there is an especial place just now for the attestation of the humanness of God by the miracles of the Incarnation which nothing else can furnish. For myself I should feel, if deprived of faith in the miracles, that God would have responded to the cry of the human soul and could not; or He could, and would not. I do not fear, however, that such an uninspiring outlook will be forced upon me.—G. A. B.]

This suitably introduces a view of the subject of miracle which I have found helpful. It is this. While the miraculous has its place and purpose in attesting the divinity of Christ, it has also a place and purpose in attesting the humanness of God. The former has been needful in the past; the need of the latter is just now coming especially into notice.

The above proposition will, however, receive some support, in considering the changed relations of science and faith, with which it is closely connected,—a change from the past, which should receive attention.

The long standing conflict between science and faith, passed some time since into a "*modus vivendi*" mutually acceptable. And this again, is being replaced by an alliance between those who most truly represent the still distinct camps. It is an alliance in spirit or purpose, yet with clearly understood spheres of influence. This is the best relation possible. Science has obtained from faith the recognition of its desire loyally to promote divine truth. Candor compels the admission, that to scientific research is largely due the increased interest in the Scriptures, as well as the incomparably richer outlook upon all life now enjoyed by faith.

In the cordial understanding at present existing, based upon the inspiration of an exalted purpose in common, we can invite science to consider the miraculous features of the Incarnation, from the point of view simply of the thoughtful layman.

The question before us—a thoroughly pertinent one—is this, viz: To what does probability point as being the true theory, in the light of which the miraculous environment of the Incarnation should be viewed?

On this question science can throw no light. It can see no farther nor more clearly than the layman; for the requirements of the situation do not appeal to reason, but to love. They primarily involve action in the sphere of love, a sphere which lies outside the domain and control of science; for love refuses to be bound by the rule and orderly procedure upon which science depends for its inductive reasoning.

The consideration of the subject must have regard mainly to the intuitive need of the soul at the period when, as alleged, the miracles occurred. It was a need long existing, for a harmonious relation to God, a relation of love, the earliest hunger of the soul in its infancy. We recall Tennyson's lines,

> "An infant crying in the night,
> An infant crying for the light,
> And with no language but a cry."

An infant's cry is ever associated in our thought with a mother's love, universally regarded as the truest personification of self-sacrificing personality. When the cry of a child is heard, nothing would be allowed to thwart her impulse to meet that want. She is as regardless of the restraints of decorous and lawful procedure, as she is heedless of obstacles and danger. This well illustrates the highest law of love, which is the disregard of any law, that would control or restrain its outgoing and the giving of itself in service for the object of devotion.

And this is the very analogy between the human and Divine used in the tender utterance of the Most High by His prophet, viz: "Can a woman forget her sucking child; yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands."

Surely the purpose of this figurative language is to help us to realize, that the love of God is such as we know a mother's love to be in its highest exercise. Should we limit the application of the figure and its teaching at the point

where it is most needed, and become most effective?

Although far within the awful idea of the infinite, seen and unseen, and its Creator, which we now have, yet in the first century enough was felt to prompt the cry of a soul in its infancy for the light and knowledge which would give it confidence in its simple conception of God.

Can we believe that hearing that infant cry, and knowing its want, the motherhood of God would not have met it in the way that would then have best supplied its need?

Should the drama of the Incarnation be stripped of that peculiar feature which unquestionably promoted the then needed faith whereby martyrs gave themselves to the fires of idolaters? a faith which has continued and has left its stamp upon nineteen centuries!

To apply the figure and the teaching in the above: Foreknown by infinite wisdom, as to the requirements for success, the self-sacrifice of Divine love in the Incarnation, was made in such a way, and was attended by circumstances

so unique in their disregard of law, as forever to impress upon the mind of man the reality both of the love and of the personality which guided its action.

Two opposite requisites have existed in the spiritual education of man. On the one hand, he must, if he fulfils the purpose of his creation, grow up into a consciousness of, and participation in, the infinite life for which he is capacitated, so far as this can be attained under present limitations. For this,—his highest education,—extended spiritual discipline is essential. On the other hand, he needed also, and yet needs (as regards, at least, the average man, with reference to whom such considerations should be viewed) something in addition to purely spiritual influences, something definite, easily apprehended, and in a sense tangible, connecting the visible with the invisible world in the way of object lesson. Much, however, of the value of this objective influence, lies in its uniqueness. Repetition would have been hurtful to the best development of the life of faith. Familiarity with such influence would have

diverted attention from the higher teaching, and probably blunted the moral susceptibilities.

It has been the same Divine power in different forms of exercise, which at one time in the past provided visible evidences of its relation to man as a relation of love and personality, and then restrained itself in the wisdom which knew what was best calculated to develop in man the highest and most Godlike of which he is capable.

Thus the maximum of unchanging law has been joined with the minimum of its infraction, requisite for the best results, and the attainment already is such as to "justify the ways of God to man."

The considerations just advanced apply with equal force to a larger purpose of miracle than merely to attest the divinity of Christ. It is a noticeable feature of the present, that the divine humanity of Christ is establishing itself in the consciousness of the Church, notwithstanding the influence of the miraculous, adverse to this, as some say. With the diminishing need of miracle on this account, there has come recently another need of miracle; and it has arisen in

connection with the new and invaluable knowledge of God just now entered into. It is the need of attestation to the Personality of God, and which—for the average mind—is assailed when law declares that miracles have ever been impossible. Faith sees in the environment of the Incarnation, provision for this need.

Besides the "mighty works" done by Christ himself, there were those in which He had apparently no part whatever; but in which He was the subject of Divine power. The virgin birth, the resurrection, the ascension, the voice from Heaven at the baptism, and again, on the Mount of Transfiguration, these—and most likely some others, whose character in this respect is uncertain—constitute a class by themselves. They point to agencies and a personality in action in the invisible world, separate and apart from Christ. They were intrusions into the world order from the unseen. They were in the fullest sense, miraculous manifestations, from—as we are warranted in believing—the divine transcendence, in distinction as it were from the divine immanence in Christ.

The former, the Deity, or Godhead; the latter, the Emanuel of God. It was the Father and the Son in co-operation: "This is my beloved son, hear ye him."

While these joined their witness with the witness of Christ's own works to His divinity, as cumulative testimony, yet their value to the humanness of God is peculiar and permanent. This has been too much overlooked. We may reverently believe that with Him, to whom a thousand years are as one day, provision would be made in the one and only great drama of the Incarnation,—not only evidence of the divinity of Christ, but also—for witness to the humanness of God, when the need for such testimony would be specially felt nearly two thousand years after.

We can hardly imagine testimony more convincing to the personality of God, as we understand that term, than was furnished in the class of miracles referred to.

Reluctantly, I must refer in this connection, to an address delivered not long since in England, under the caption, "Reconstruction and

Restatement." The author is a well-known Friend, deservedly held in high esteem for his rare combination of scientific attainments and spiritual life. I have read other writings of his with interest, and hope to read more. I cannot forbear, however, protesting with kindly yet restrained frankness, against the position he has now taken. It is shown concisely in the following paragraph which I quote from the address: "To such a one, whose religion is thus an inner conviction, not founded on any external authority, no intellectual proofs of Christianity are needed. None can replace the personal revelation that is his own. Arguments founded on "analogies" and "evidences" are largely wasted on him. He needs no *miracle-mongering* to convince him. Nay, he will hold to his faith in Christ in spite of all the miracles that a credulous and non-scientific age heaped up around the historical narratives of His birth and life and death. Not even the wildest of them (and the orthodox church rejected many more than it retained) will shake his faith. He knows that exactly the same kind of legend

has grown up amongst every primitive people around any hero of commanding personality. To such a one the pious legends woven about the Christ will appear just as rational, just as right in their place, and just as unnecessary of belief now, as any of those narrated of Moses, or Buddha or Plato."

The author represents the comparatively small class of scholarly minds (certainly not *more* than one per cent) who have added to their moral union with God, a highly intellectual and philosophic one. Is he justified in condemning what he refers to as "miracle-mongering," and in dismissing as "legends," those circumstances of the Incarnation substantially unchallenged for eighteen centuries, and which in the opinion of at least ninety-nine per cent of professing Christians have been, and are yet, an important factor in the upbuilding of the church?

He has a perfect right to disown for himself all benefit flowing from the miraculous, and to ascribe his undoubted spirituality solely to intuitive response to the spiritual beauty of the

character of Christ; although in view of the past we may well believe that he owes indirectly to miracles much more than he now admits.

Is there not instruction, at the present time, for us, in the command of the Lord to His chosen people on their way to the promised land, "Thou shalt remember *all* the way which the Lord thy God hath led thee?"

Conceding, however, the right of our friend to personal independence as above stated; it is far otherwise when he needlessly attacks the credibility of the miraculous.

He ascribes the belief of the early Church in miracles to the fact, that it was a credulous and non-scientific age, that is to say, a spiritually unintelligent age. *He* is standing in the light of the cumulative experience of the past, and also,—which is far more important,—in the light of a new revelation, which adds incalculably to the spiritual outlook of the present. Yet it is from *this standpoint* and in *this light*, that he decides what was necessary or unnecessary to meet the requirements of the spiritual and mental level of eighteen hundred years ago.

Has he not violated even scientific propriety in such an unwarranted judgment?

Better far would it be and more likely to promote the growth of a defensibly philosophic view of this great subject, if his attitude of toleration, kindly yet patronizing, were replaced by intelligent sympathy. And this could be done, if science winged by faith would rise to a point of view sufficiently comprehensive to show the true relation of the past to the present, *both* of them being stages in man's education up to the infinite. In that view the past would be seen in its relation to the present as the partial and introductory as the completed ideal and maturing growth towards that ideal. It is the relation of the "blade to the ear and the full corn in the ear;" the childish to the mature though still growing manhood in Christ, and the nourishment must correspond,—milk for babes and strong meat for men. In this view, his idea of "reconstruction" is entirely out of place.

If, however, Science can not join with Faith in this comprehensive view, then I may say, that

my confidence is so strong in the emotional basis of the spiritual life (let me repeat this, with careful self-conscious discernment, for I can offer nothing, perhaps, more practically important in connection with changing religious thought); my confidence is so strong in an emotional unreasoned basis of the life of Faith, that I am fearless as to the results of reverent, conscientious, exact scholarship. I will gladly help to strengthen the hitherto existing basis of the spiritual life, by whatever philosophic thought and research can add thereto. I already owe it much. While there might not be entire unity of thought with the scholar, yet my fellowship with him in Christ, would be unchilled. This is the only defensible position to take in the full light of Christ's teaching.

Yet I would have to remind our scientist friend, that there are reciprocal obligations in this matter which should be observed. He would only be recognizing this obligation on the part of the newly-existing one per cent (i. e., the scientific mind) toward the ninety-nine per cent representing the Church of the past, if he

limits his proselyting influence to that which is found in the unworded language of a Christ-like, a *more* Christ-like, character. In this holy rivalry all could cordially unite.

A main postulate of science is the control of unchanging law to the exclusion of all miracle in the past, as well as the present. The recent advance of knowledge gives this principle an unduly dominating influence which endangers the spiritual life of the average and non-scientific mind. If the past has always been as silent and as empty in its objective appeals to man as law asserts that it has, then must the unseen world be practically emptied of all idea of Personality, apprehensible *by the average mind.* Such a position, it seems to me, in effect, though unintentionally plays into the hands of materialism. It co-operates with Haeckel's "Riddle of the Universe," published within a very few years. *His* denial of immortality is supported by accounting for everything through an alleged potency in matter itself, and not because of the all-pervasive life of an infinite divine Personality. It is a sadly significant fact, that even with

its cold and dreary arguments, yet in the first year after its publication, one hundred and ten thousand copies of that book were sold.

The position above opposed, makes law the rival instead of the hand-maid of Infinite Love. Yet "God is Love;" He is not law. While law is unchanging, we deny that it has always been unchangeable by Him, of whom it is an expression.

In view, therefore, of what has been advanced, I feel that there is place, especially just now, for that attestation to the humanness of God, that is, to the Personality of the Divine Nature, which can be found in the cosmic miracles of the Incarnation, and which nothing else can furnish.

For myself, I freely acknowledge, that it would put me to much confusion, if compelled to accept the incredibility of the miraculous. Appreciating all that the revelation of Christ has made possible, of the knowledge of God, I yet would feel myself shut up to the sadly disquieting alternative, either that God would have responded to the outstretched hands and

cry of the soul 2000 years ago but could not, or that He could have done so, but would not,—even once for all time. The difference of outlook would be comparable to that of opposite horizons. I do not fear, however, that I shall be deprived of the inspiration which may attend the upward glance, from a busy street corner, to some grand cloud effect at mid-day, a vision receiving added grandeur from the thought of that ascending figure of Christ, most clearly seen through tears,—vanishing from physical sight, but ever helpful to faith, in connecting all that is purified and precious in the life of the present with the Eternity of God, in a bond of infinite love and glory.

CHAPTER V.

A Personal Experience.

[*Outline of the Argument.*—The Personality of God and the reality of the invisible world were further vindicated to David Scull in a remarkable experience. A friend was impressed in a most unusual way to pray that his life might be spared. Soon after he escaped death in a railway wreck in which many were killed all about him. It was as though invisible hands had lifted the great mass of wreckage over his head that he might escape.

The intelligence manifested in shaping beautiful flowers, in giving the wild bee his intelligence, in such marvels as the Roentgen rays, and the power of electricity to transmit the sound of the voice, confirm the inference from such experiences as the above, that the Divine Nature is Personal. —G. A. B.]

I have shown, I think, my desire to promote the conscious relation of the soul to the Divine Personality of the spiritual world. In furtherance of this desire, I feel free to state my experience in a wreck, which occurred on the Boston and Albany Railroad about midsummer of 1893.

My sister and I left Albany at 9.30 in the morning. The wreck occurred about 12.30. The train, moving at about forty miles an hour, broke through a bridge and fell into the stream twenty to twenty-five feet below. Our car, a Pullman sleeper, turned nearly a half somersault. Of the thirteen who were killed, nine were in our car.

About 12 o'clock I had walked to the end of the train, staying there a few minutes, just for a change. On returning, I took my seat temporarily in the compartment across the aisle, seating myself with my back to the engine, as a man was reclining in the other seat.

The accident occurred soon after. When it was over—as it was in five or six seconds—I found myself clear of the wreckage except below my knees, where I was caught and firmly held. Three dead bodies were within reach of my hand. The man who had been *vis-à-vis* to me was dead, under four or five feet of wreckage; a little above him was the body of a woman—and still higher, my sister.

I have stated this detail as it seemed very

strange to me at the time, that my relation to the man who had been so close to me, should have been so changed, he being several feet under, and I lifted almost clear of the débris.

On returning from the funeral of my sister, Anna Troth, who rode by invitation in our carriage, asked me if I had received a letter from her directed to my office. I had not; but during the evening, I went to my office, on Fourth Street below Chestnut, and read it. Anna Troth was a woman of rare power in prayer. Many were the seals to the effectiveness of her petitions. It is only about two months since that for her,—

> "Hope was changed to glad fruition,
> Faith to sight, and prayer to praise."

I have explained how it was that I read her letter at a time and where its impressiveness was heightened by the surroundings; the felt contrast (suggested by that part of the city) between earthly ambitions and the spiritual realities which seemed touching me so closely, as in the deep quiet of the hour, there I read her letter.

About ten days before, "while very busy," she wrote, "the prompting came to me most inpressively to pray for David Scull's life, with the assurance that it would be in danger; but I put it aside with the feeling that you were both safe at Lake Mohonk, and why should such a thought come to me?" But it came again; yet still she hesitated with the thought, "Would it be kind? Why should earthly prayer hinder him?"

"But again the prompting came a day or two afterwards. Our precious little Miriam (her niece) had died, and I had come home from brother's to get some needed articles, and was in my own room for a few moments; *across my busy thoughts* that prompting came as if God spoke."

At once she knelt and prayed that my life might be spared, and I be given grace and help and strength for my need. "At once," she wrote, "the burden was gone!"

I have not the slightest doubt that invisible hands protected me! I remember very distinctly the darkness for a few moments, and the rush

of air against my face as I went through the mass of material overhead in a Pullman sleeper, and as if in conclusive evidence of this, I was quite severely scratched down both cheeks, and bruised down the side of my body, and then firmly held below the knees.

Is it surprising that the newspapers referred to it as a miraculous escape? I believe they were right. I cannot doubt that she who I know awaits me at the pearly gates—that she, the ministering angel—was permitted to shield my head in those awful moments. I will only add that that evening at the hotel in Boston, I read in a devotional book for daily reading, the text of that day,—"Now keep thy sorrow to thyself, and bear with a good courage that which has befallen thee!" Much more impressive, however, was the verse for the day in another book of similar character which my sister used, and which was received by me from her baggage not long after. She had probably read from it that morning this verse:—"There is but a step betwixt me and death!"

What deep interest for us is found in all such

well-established experiences as these, experiences in the "borderland" between the physical and the spiritual, the mortal and the immortal! How utterly impenetrable are they to the finite mind!

Without venturing to dwell upon the mystery of prayer, neither affirming nor denying anything, it would seem as though I could have been saved without learning through another person of the agency employed. And yet it was less the fact of preservation, than this added evidence of the manner of it, that has made the outlook upon all life, visible and invisible, so different for me ever since.

This, I trust, will be accepted as an adequate excuse for what seems like a violation of propriety, in thus reading anything so sacredly personal. Yet I may say, that I have hitherto regarded the injunction of privacy. The fingers of one hand would be more than enough on which to count those outside of my family, who, in this country, know of the circumstance, and fewer still, in England. But now, that it may help some others to a more vivid sense

of the reality of the life in the unseen, I feel that I may with propriety use it on this occasion.

Not until that day, when we "shall know even as we are known" (words of all-comprehensive meaning), not till then, shall we understand such experiences.

They are the ultimate facts of the mystery of life to be revealed in the future—the mystery of the one universal life, which in *other forms* is all about us here and now, yet become so familiar as to have lost its full significance for us.

The mystery of the floral kingdom; the intelligence—the *kind* of intelligence which moulds perishable matter into such forms of grace and symmetry—that paints the lines and points the delicate shadings of color in countless combinations of beauty; that distills the perfumes—and again, the mystery in another form of intelligence, that shown by the wild bee, which after completely burying itself in flowers scores of times, will then know, and instantly take, the direct line toward its home even on a cloudy day. The recently discovered mysteries of radium and the Roentgen rays with their

marvelous agencies, the telephone conveying through a small wire for hundreds of miles distinguishable variations of voice; and the almost magical results of Luther Burbank in California, with his derived creative power in the vegetable kingdom.

All the discoveries just referred to, and the changes of thought therewith regarding the Divine order have occurred within the easy recollection of those now present.

They show us that an invisible energy ever surrounds us! They invite us to glance along upward, vanishing vistas of life toward the infinite, in which lies our inheritance in Christ!

CHAPTER VI.

THE GOSPEL OF THE INFINITE MIND.

[*Outline of the Argument.*—The revelations which God has been making of Himself in the last few decades have already produced so many good results and are so rich in promise as to justify the conviction that in the near future the present period will be regarded as the dawning of another Gospel day, the *Gospel of the Infinite Mind.* The unrest and friction conspicuous in the Church to-day is due to an inadequate recognition of the distinction between the moral and intellectual history of the soul, and the relation that they bear to man's education—the knowledge of the infinite love and the knowledge of the infinite mind.

Truth has been likened to a sphere. The Gospel of the love of God is but half the sphere. A new revelation brings to view the Gospel of the infinite mind. This completes the sphere and completes the Divine preparation for man's education. Hitherto man has been engaged with the manward side of the perfect sphere. He was not prepared for the full truth about God.

The experience of participation in the infinitude of mind as well as the infinitude of love cannot be fully expressed. It is suggested by figures and images employed in certain Psalms. Among these are the twenty-third and ninety-first, but especially the one hundred and thirty-ninth. This last is in a class by itself, and in figurative language teaches the present-day thought of the consubstantiality of God and

man. It expresses beautifully the truth that man was a thought of God at creation's dawn. The Incarnation was absolutely needful to meet the broad requirements of the human race in its education of love. The present self-revelations of God are essential to bring the human mind into an understanding of its true relation to the Divine mind. The prophets and many in the Old Testament besides illustrated the consciousness of essential unity with God. Many martyrs and mystics have since the Incarnation done the same. The testimony of a sewing woman of the eighteenth century bears clear witness to it. Emerson, Martineau, and Calthrop bear witness to the same relation of the soul to the Infinite Mind. In conclusion, our thought is turned to the beauty of the infinite love, for precious as is the truth of the infinite mind, the thought of the infinite love is even more precious.—G. A. B.]

In conclusion, I am well aware of the poverty of thought and expression, at some important points, in that which has been presented. I trust, however, I have encouraged the idea, that it is our privilege to be living in a period of great significance and wonderful promise. This should, I believe, be stated more strongly. The revelations which God has, in the last few decades, been making of Himself, have already sufficiently proved themselves in present results, and are yet so rich in possibilities and promise, as to justify the conviction that in the

near future, the present period will come to be regarded as the dawning of another Gospel day, the *Gospel of Infinite Mind.* It would be an advantage if the relation of the present to the past were more widely seen in the comprehensive light of this truth.

I am fully persuaded that the unrest and friction so conspicuous in the Church to-day, is substantially due to the inadequate recognition of the distinction between the moral and the intellectual history of the soul, and the relation they bear to the supreme purpose of man's spiritual education, the knowledge of the infinite love and also the knowledge of the infinite mind.

Truth is often likened to a sphere. It is a figure specially adapted to illustrate some aspects of the relation which, in the light of the present, man is seen to hold to God. The Gospel of Christ,—the revelation of the infinite love,—has been successful, partly in realization, but more so in assured promise. Yet it has been, and of itself is still controlled by its own limitations to its intended purpose, the promotion of the filial relation of love. In addition

to this, the Gospel of the infinite *mind* was required to reveal the perfect sphere of truth. Therefore, now, in the fullness of time, another Divine revelation opens the way for man to enter into a new relation to God, a consciously intelligent participation in the infinite mind here and now. As man has for nearly two thousand years been growing into and in the immortality and the infinitude of love, so now he is invited to enter into and grow in the immortality and the infinitude of mind. We may reverently believe that this completes the Divine *preparation* for man's spiritual education. Progress in this knowledge there will of course be, both now and in the unseen world. But with the knowledge of infinite love and mind now open to us, we may reverently believe that there are no new attributes of the Almighty yet to be revealed. We can now know God as to *quality*, while as to *quantity*, the infinite future will be needed, and our equipment with new powers, of which we can form no conception.

It has appeared to me that the two forms of experience and knowledge just referred to are

fairly well described as, the "Divine Philosophy of Life," and the "Philosophy of the Divine Itself." They correspond with the two halves of the perfect sphere of truth.

Hitherto man has been engaged with the manward side, so to speak, of the perfect sphere. To him it would naturally appear, from the earthward side, to be complete and full rounded, notwithstanding the absence of intellectual truth about God, and in lieu thereof positive error, with which his thought of God was mingled. He was not yet ready for the truth about God, seen from the heavenward, or infinite side.

The experience of participation in the infinitude of mind alike with the same relation to the infinitude of love, cannot be expressed in words. The finite cannot define the infinite. It would not be the infinite if it were definable. Only its results can be manifested, and its subtle influences be felt. It can only be brought before the mind suggestively.

The suitability of figure and imagery for suggesting the infinite is largely seen in the Psalms. The same figure for some aspect

of spiritual experience, can be appropriated alike by the aged saint and by the newly enlisted follower of Christ. Each can read into it his own experience, and its meaning will expand to suit his case. Thus the Psalms are an unfailing storehouse of recorded spiritual experience for all time.

Some Psalms, especially the twenty-third, ninety-first and a few others, are particularly acceptable, because of their suitability to express the experiences of the soul, under the changes and vicissitudes incident to life.

But the one hundred and thirty-ninth Psalm is in a class almost by itself,—strictly by itself, if the quantity as well as the quality of its inspired utterance is regarded. In its figurative language, the relation of God to man,—the true, the spiritual man,—is taught in a way that harmonizes most interestingly with the central truth of present-day thought, "The consubstantiality of God and man." Notice the sixteenth verse: "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in contin-

uance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."

Could faith alone, or science alone, hitherto; or faith and science in their largely common light of to-day, express more incisively the basic truth about man as a thought of God, even at creation's dawn? And this Divine idea or pattern was ineradicably wrought into the germ of infinite life first implanted in man.

The Incarnation was absolutely needful to meet the broad requirements of the human race in its education of love. Likewise, the present self-revelations of God are essential to bring the human mind into an understanding of its true relation to the Divine mind. It is equally true, however, that through the ages before, as well as since the Incarnation, there has been a succession of those who in their day and generation bore witness intuitively, yet more or less clearly, to the high lineage and exalted destiny of the soul.

Aside from the prophets—the recognized spokesmen of the Lord to His people,—there were the many of whom the Old Testament

speaks, often in private life,—who illustrated their possession of the quality of the Divine—those who growing upward above their fellows, were met by the Eternal Spirit, and, according to their measure, entered into a consciousness of their essential union with God.

Since the Incarnation, the many martyrs and mystics have continued this testimony. In all ranks of life, but more often among the unlearned they realized a vital connection with the infinite love accompanied sometimes with betrayed evidence of sympathies springing from a latent consciousness of union also with the infinite mind.

The following appears to have been written by a sewing woman in the eighteenth century; it is the very brief, but full autobiography of a life, which was a success according to the highest test:

"I do not know when I have had happier times in my soul, than when I have been sitting at work, with nothing before me but a candle and a white cloth, and hearing no sound but that of my own breath, with God in my soul and heaven in my eye. I rejoice in being exactly what I am,—a creature capable of loving God, and who, as long as God

lives, must be happy. I get up and look for a while out of the window, and gaze at the moon and stars, the work of an Almighty hand. I think of the grandeur of the universe, and then sit down and think myself one of the happiest beings in it."

The consciousness which expressed itself in these simple phrases of the sewing woman, was one in origin and character with that which animated the cultured mind of Emerson in his lines:—

"Teach me your mood, ye patient stars,
Who climb each night the ancient sky
Leaving no space, no shade, no scar,
No trace of age, no fear to die!"

It is told of Emerson that a fellow townsman met him with the assurance that the world would come to an end on a day in the near future, and he had better be ready! "Well," said the philosopher—he, who with his feet on the earth, yet kept his head amongst the stars—"Well," said he, "I believe I can get along without it!"

And Martineau, another great spiritual mind of the last century, says,—

"In proportion as our nature rises in its nobleness does it realize its immortality. As it retires from animal grossness,

from selfish meanness, from pitiable ignorance or sordid neglect,—as it opens forth into its true intellectual and moral glory,—do its doubts disperse, its affections aspire; the veil is uplifted from the future, the darkness breaks away, and the spirit walks in dignity within the Paradise of God's eternity."

And finally, this exquisite sonnet by a prophet of the infinite, named Calthrop, of Syracuse, New York:

"When last beneath the midnight stars I trod,
  An awe fell on me from those depths afar,—
Great seas of silence round each separate star,
  Fathomless distances, filled full of God!
Heaven beyond heaven without bound or bar!
  And thus my lips:—"Thy love I cannot claim,
Infinite Heart! whose pulses like a sea,
  Strike shore of sun and star, yet onward flame,
Unspent, unbroken, everlastingly."
  Thus spake I by infinitude oppressed!
Yet ever wrapt in peace, (for thought too deep,)
  Like some small sea-bird on the waves asleep,
My steadfast heart all unaware did rest,
  Oh! Father, on the ocean of Thy breast."

Could language suggest by figure more beautiful, more incisive, the relation of the soul to the infinite mind? I realize that I could not wish a more suitable stopping-place for these reflections as regards that part of my purpose. Yet,

I would have my closing thought other than that; for, if I must choose, as it were, between the two wings of the Heavenly Dove, I do not hesitate in preferring to close with a thought of love; that love which bears its own seal of immortality, and also has proved its power here and now in Time, to enclose and sanctify the human love which gives to this life its sweetness and perennial beauty. I am glad, however, that there can be a harmony in the figures I employ. With the figure of the sea-bird, as the soul on the breast of the Infinite, I can join the figure of the beloved disciple at the Last Supper, reclining his head on the breast of the same Infinite, as Love Incarnate. From his words, the words of John the Revelator, I read, "And behold, a door was opened in heaven, and I beheld; and lo, in the midst of the throne, stood a Lamb as it had been slain."

"The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," and "who taketh away the sin of the world." "The Lamb, to whom, with His followers, shall be the victory." Yes, to Thee, Oh! Christ, *is* the victory! To Thee who

when on this earth, as the Incarnate Word of God, declared, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

"Oh! saddest, sweetest bond! And can it be
That through His sorrow joy shall come to me?
That thus His glorious beauty I shall see?
Oh! eyes, for whom such vision is in store,
Keep ye to all things pure forevermore,
Till ye shall close beside death's shadowed door.
Be lighted from within by unseen Guest,
Send out warm rays of love to all distressed,
And by your shining lure them into rest."

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